

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONTRE 00041 071643Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

TRSE-00 /058 W

-----071650Z 105509 /47

P 071620Z JAN 77

FM AMCONSUL MONTREAL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8456

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL QUEBEC PRIORITY

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJ: PUBLIC VIEW ON QUEBEC "SEPARATION"

1. LATEST GALLUP POLL INDICATES MAJORITY (75 O/O) OF CANADIANS IN GENERAL, AND EVEN GREATER MAJORITY (87 O/O) OF QUEBECKERS, DOUBT QUEBECKERS WANT TO SEPARATE, ALTHOUGH MOST BELIEVE PQ GOVERNMENT WILL ATTEMPT TO ACHIEVE SEPARATION (NATIONALLY: 54 O/O; QUEBEC: 63 O/O).

2. PHRASING OF BOTH QUESTIONS WAS VERY IMPERSONAL, LEADING PQ SPOKESMEN TO TRY DISCREDIT RESULTS. FIRST QUESTION WAS: "NOW THAT THE PARTI QUEBECOIS HAS BEEN ELECTED AS THE GOVERNMENT OF QUEBEC, DO YOU BELIEVE THAT IT WILL ATTEMPT TO SEPARATE QUEBEC OR NOT?" SECOND WAS: "DO YOU BELIEVE THAT A MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF QUEBEC WANT TO SEPARATE FROM CANADA OR NOT?" QUEBEC MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS CLAUDE MORIN CRITICIZED BOTH THE TERM "SEPARATE" AND THE IDEA OF ASKING, IN ESSENCE, "WHAT DO YOU THINK OTHERS THINK?" MEMBERS OPPOSITION, LIBERAL AND UNION NATIONALE, NATURALLY FOUND RESULTS PROVED WHAT THEY HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT.

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PAGE 02 MONTRE 00041 071643Z

3. COMMENT: MORIN'S OBJECTIONS HAVE SURFACE APPEAL OF LOGIC, AT LEAST FROM THEIR STANDPOINT, IN VIEW PQ INSISTENCE THEY DO NOT WANT TO "SEPARATE" BUT TO ACQUIRE "POLITICAL SOVEREIGNTY", AND BECAUSE OF APPARENT AVOIDANCE OF "HOW DO YOU (UNDERSCORED) FEEL?" NONETHELESS, RESPONDERS TO SECOND QUESTION WERE PRESUMABLY REFLECTING THE ATTITUDES THEY ENCOUNTER -- THOSE OF THEIR RELATIVES, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS. IF SO, FACT 87 O/O SAID "NO" INDICATES

FEW ARE NOTING INDEPENDENTIST SYMPATHIES. MOREOVER, THE "DON'T
KNOW" LEVEL WAS LOW COMPARED TO MANY POLLS HERE, I.E., 15 O/O -
NATIONALLY, 10 O/O QUEBEC, ON FIRST QUESTION AND 11 O/O
NATIONALLY, 7 O/O QUEBEC, ON SECOND. NOT LEAST, ALTHOUGH
COUCHED DIFFERENTLY FROM "DO YOU FAVOR INDEPENDENCE" IN PINARD-
HAMILTON POLL OF LATE-NOVEMBER (MONTREAL 1783) AND EARLIER
POLLS, RESULTS REINFORCE VIEW THAT "INDEPENDENCE" HAD MORE
SUPPORT AS ABSTRACT, HYPOTHETICAL PROPOSITION THAN IN CIRCUMSTANCES
IN WHICH CONCEPT MIGHT HAVE PROSPECT OF BECOMING REALITY.
HARPER

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Message Attributes

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